

# *Ex-CBI Roundup*

—CHINA—BURMA—INDIA—



**NOVEMBER**  
**1959**







HOLY MAN at temple near Ramgarh. Anyone who served very long in India will remember the so-called "holy men" who were seen in various parts of the country. Photo by H. Wm. Seigle.



# EX-CBI ROUNDUP

CHINA · BURMA · INDIA

Vol. 13, No. 9

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Ex-CBI ROUNDUP, established 1946, is a reminiscing magazine published monthly except AUGUST and SEPTEMBER at Laurens, Iowa, by and for former members of U. S. Units stationed in the China-Burma-India Theater during World War II. Ex-CBI Roundup is the official publication of the China-Burma-India Veterans Association.

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## Letter FROM The Editors . . .

● **Despite the fact** that no August or September issues of Roundup have been published since 1956, the summer "vacation" still brings in many letters from subscribers who fear they may have been missed. We appreciate this continued interest . . . We hope you'll keep right on contacting us whenever you feel that an issue is overdue.

● **Due to circumstances** beyond our control, our mailing dates vary somewhat from month to month. We find, also, that it sometimes takes a couple weeks for all copies to reach their destination after they leave Laurens. For these reasons you probably won't receive Roundup at the same time each month.

● **Cover Photo** this month, furnished by the U. S. Army, shows Chinese troops carrying equipment over Tengchung Road towards Lungling, China, in November 1944.

● **A letter** from the Hon. David McKendree Key, former Ambassador to Burma who now heads American Medical Center for Burma, Inc., comments on the article about Dr. Gordon Seagrave's hospital which appeared in our October issue. He writes: "I feel sure that your subscribers, many of whom knew Dr. Seagrave, will be interested to learn that he has continued to carry on his work but that he is in need of assistance, and we are grateful to you for having brought this to their attention."

● **Several articles** of special interest are scheduled for early issues. Watch for them!

NOVEMBER, 1959



## Dr. Bachman Dies

● Another of our great CBI surgeons, Dr. George Bachman, has passed away. He served in Burma and China, with Y-Force, I believe.

CHARLES GOODMAN,  
New York, N. Y.

## Seattle in 1962

● For those who are making their plans for 1961, it will be of interest that the Seattle World Fair, Century 21 Exposition, has been postponed until 1962 to give foreign countries more time to prepare for their participation. We welcome all CBIers to visit Seattle at that time. Incidentally, our basha intends to have a dinner meeting at 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12, in the Colonial Pancake House at 7th and Blanchard in Seattle. Reservations should be sent to the undersigned, Dhobi Wallah Basha commander.

LEE BAKKER,  
621-12th Ave. N.  
Seattle 2, Wash.



CHINESE coolies carry heavy loads of rice during harvest near Kunming. Photo by George J. Johns.





TYPICAL view of Chinese Army on the march in Southern Kwangsi, China. Photo by William E. Main.

#### Assam For Tourists?

● The article in October issue about Assam maybe becoming an unusual tourist mecca was interesting. But I have strong doubts that people would want to visit that vast wilderness in any great numbers. I'd rather spend my time in Bombay or New Delhi, where there is more likelihood of finding something interesting to do and see.

WILLIAM D. STOUT,  
Chicago, Ill.

#### Ghandi Memorial

● In the Architectural Record of July 1959 was the following appeal from Mahatma Ghandi Memorial College via a friend in Wisconsin: "Surplus hard-cover books that have to do with medicine, engineering, architecture, etc., are sorely needed by Mahatma Ghandi Memorial College. Students are very poor and cannot afford to buy textbooks essential to their studies. If you have any such books lying about, inscribe your name on the inside cover, add a friendly word to the prospective reader—then mail to Mahatma Ghandi Memorial College, Udipi, Mysore State, India."

LEE BAKKER,  
Seattle, Wash.

#### Burma Veteran Dies

● James C. Neary, 40, of Waukegan, Ill., holder of the Army Distinguished Flying Cross and Veteran of 106 missions flying cargo in Burma during World War II, died recently.

JERRY VANSON,  
Chicago, Ill.

#### Col. Hunter Retires

● Congratulations to Colonel Charles Hunter on his retirement. His name will always be associated with Merrill's Marauders.

TOM L. SAEGER,  
Pueblo, Colo.

#### Back To India?

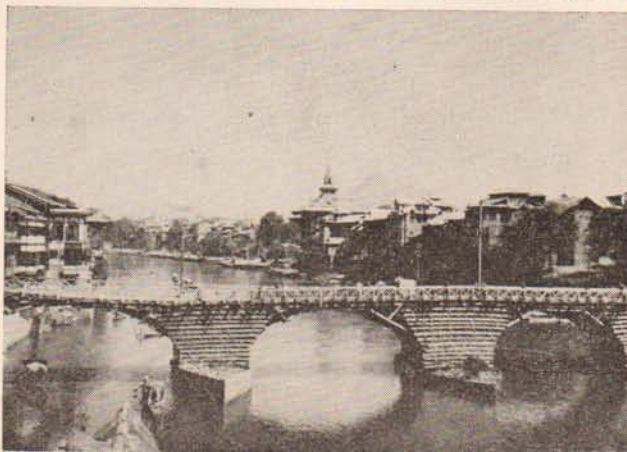
● For a time, it looked as though Americans were going to help India fight a war on their soil again. But, did you ever see anything so critical blow over so fast as did that situation? How long will the Communists continue such terror tactics throughout the world?

HERBERT J. KING,  
Phoenix, Ariz.

#### Now in Arabia

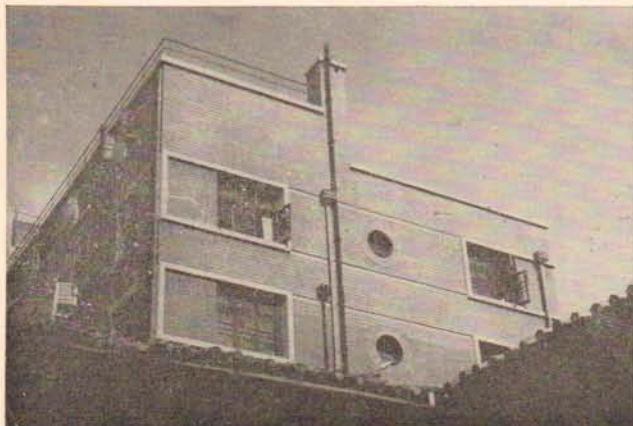
● I was a nurse with the 73rd Evacuation Hospital stationed at Ledo and in Shingbuiyang, Burma, during 1943-45. Since 1950 I have been employed with the Arabian American Oil Company in Saudi Arabia. I occasionally meet someone here who served in CBI and pass on the magazine. Many do not know the magazine exists. After being here so many years, I get memories confused with events of Burma and India. I am reminded much of those days by working with many Indians here and I had the chance to re-visit Bombay in 1955 while on a short leave in Ceylon. It would be fun to attend a convention some day when I get back to the States.

FLORENCE EDGINGTON,  
ARAMCO, Box 2726  
Dhahran, Saudi Arabia



BRIDGE at Srinagar, Kashmir. Photo by H. Wm. Seigle.





RED CROSS club at Kunming, China. Photo by Bob McClure.

#### With Lawrence Welk

● Wonder why no one has ever mentioned Rocky Rockwell, who plays the trumpet in Lawrence Welk's Champagne Music. He played in the U. S. Air Force band at Delhi, India, during the war.

WINFIELD BURKE,  
Chillicothe, Ohio

#### Funds For Seagrave

● Enjoyed "Success Adds Burdens for Seagrave" in the October edition. Why is it that this grand old man who has devoted his life to helping the Burmese people must beg for funds to carry on his wonderful work? Not long ago I read an article in a magazine about Dr. Seagrave wanting some young doctor to spare a few years of his practice to helping out in the hospital at Namkham. Dr. Seagrave is humanitarian enough to want someone to carry on the work he has started after he is gone. If he needs funds, there is no better cause for Ex-CBI Roundup and the CBI Veterans Assn. than to jointly raise all they can among their members and subscribers and send it to him. If you sponsor such a campaign, I will be happy to be the first contributor with \$5.

PAUL S. SHERMAN,  
San Diego, Calif.

#### Bolender Death

● Terribly sorry to learn of the death of Bob Bolender. He was a fine fellow and to suffer so tragic a death is shocking.

GERALD WATERS,  
Toledo, Ohio

#### Missed CBI Reunion

● Sure hated to miss the CBI reunion this year, but am already making plans to be at Cedar Rapids next year. I would think attendance would grow each year, as more and more CBI men and women find out about it.

COLBY R. STEARN,  
Santa Fe, N. M.

#### Nostalgic Reminder

● Always enjoy reminiscing each time the magazine arrives. Actually, Roundup is about the only reminder of my days in India since it has been many years ago that I saw anyone from my old outfit.

SAMUEL HOSEAU,  
Elmhurst, Ill.

#### Frances Ducey Passes

● The death of Frances Ducey in San Francisco brought tears to my eyes. Anyone who knew this wonderful Red Cross gal in Delhi, Calcutta or Shanghai (later Tokyo) will confirm she was worth her weight in gold to a GI's morale.

HOWARD KIRBY,  
Tampa, Fla.

#### Optical Illusion!

● At first glance, the photo of the 1875th company street on page 23 of June issue, looked like a line of overturned burned-out vehicles!

CHARLES HARSH,  
Amarillo, Tex.

#### Served at Ondal

● Was in the U. S. Army during World War II and served in Ondal, India, from 1943 through 1945.

JOHN S. WALTON, Jr.,  
Mobile, Ala.



JUNKS at port in Kunming, China. Most of them hauled sugar cane and vegetables. Photo by Jim Wilkinson.



"Out There Awaits Our Tomorrow"

# The Flying Tigers And Me

BY BRIG. GEN. ROBERT L. SCOTT

(Reprinted with permission from SAGA)

There are lots of sayings attributed to those who love the sky, from the Wright Brothers to the farsighted men at Cape Canaveral. But the one I remember that made the biggest impression on me goes:

I don't want to be the boldest

I'd rather be the oldest . . .

I always wonder why. I never wanted to be the oldest anything; I wanted to be the boldest. It's a moot question what kind of a pilot I was, but I did spend three and a half solid years above the earth, and the last 4,000 hours were in single-seater jets. Some people estimate that I flew 6,000,000 miles in all, and these last 11 years in jets took me about 2,000,000 miles.

Right now I'd like to say I know for sure I was the luckiest pilot in the world. Not lucky that I didn't get shot down, but lucky that I ever got to fly those wonderful machines at all. There were days back in 1932 at Randolph Field when my instructor used to shake his head and send the hackles on the back of my neck really rising. I was sure he was going to "wash me out." Little Joe Bailey would say: "Scott, you fly too close in formation and you dive in on those clouds like they were enemy airplanes. And when I look in the rear view mirror to study your relaxation coefficient, the expression on your face scares me. What the hell are you thinking about?"

Well, that was why I was scared. But what little Joe didn't know was that to me those clouds actually were enemy airplanes and I was busy shooting them down. I got through as unorthodox as I was and as much as I scared him, because I never missed a "forced landing." (When the instructor cuts the gun, throttles back or cuts the switches, and shouts "forced landing." Then the student



has to look below, above, and especially ahead, pick a field and maneuver the ship by gliding with power off until the wheels almost touch a Texas cornfield he has picked out. Only after the student has shown that he can pick his field and maneuver in, does the instructor take over again, for safety's sake.) Well, those "forced landings" got me by, and as soon as I had my own ship down in Panama, I decided there never would be a time when I couldn't do all the things an airplane will let you do.

That flying was the life all right. While some pilots might fly just as little as was necessary to pick up their flight pay—they had to do four hours and ten landings a month—I usually got that much logged before noon on the first day of the month. For me, flying was like what dancing is to a ballerina, or playing the piano is to a dedicated musician, and I couldn't practice too much.

In tropical Panama it was the custom to start out the day real early in the fighters. Then we'd go in formation to the gunnery range at Rio Hato and fire our two machine guns—one fifty-and one thirty-caliber—into the big, black, 36-inch bull's-eyes.

Most of my brother pilots were normal people. They flew half a day and went

*The only battle our Air Force ever lost was the fight to keep Robert L. Scott behind a desk. In World War II, Scotty was Claire Chennault's right-hand man in China and the flight leader of the Flying Tigers. His combat record rates him as one of the world's greatest aces. A man of many talents, the general also wrote a wartime best seller: "God Is My Co-Pilot." Now, in an exclusive SAGA feature, General Scott writes eloquently of America's glorious past in the air—and her future in space.*



to beer call at the PX and then home to take their wives shopping in Panama City. Then they'd grab a nap and get up just in time to go to the colonel's cocktail party on the Army Air Corps Station, which was usually commanded by some fat old cavalry officer who had recently transferred to the Air Corps for the flight pay. Why not? Most of the Army still figured the airplane was kind of like a horse. Anyway, I was supposed to fly with them in the morning, drink that good Atlas Panamanian beer at noon, and take a siesta. But I never made a good Latin. I slipped out after one beer with my squadron commander and went down to the hangar and worked with Sergeant Curtiss, my crew chief.

When we finished, I'd have to test fly the plane, so I would head for the stationary ground targets at Rio Hato. Later on I graduated to moving targets—black and white fabric sleeves being towed by another fighter—and I went on merrily expending the ammunition, which was strictly not expendable. That was in the mid 1930s, and there wasn't a dime for anything. I had no idea that the ammunition I was firing at the ground targets, the tow targets and the sharks in Panama Bay was all that my squadron had for all the 25 to 30 pilots in the whole organization. Not knowing what I was doing, I shot it all up.

The first time I was called on the colonel's carpet, he asked, "Where in hell is the fifty-odd thousand rounds of thirty-caliber and fifty-caliber machine-gun ammo?"

I looked innocent and said I was armament officer in the 78th Pursuit Squadron, as well as communications adjutant, operations officer and a few other minor jobs besides doing the test work, too. (They really saddled a second lieutenant with responsibility in those days.) I explained that I'd been trying to save gasoline, so I'd combined gunnery with test work. I'd gone to Rio Hato and practiced navigation too, thus killing three birds with one stone.

The colonel let out a yell and told me I'd expended all the goddam ammunition in the whole 19th Composite Wing of the General Headquarters, Army Air Force, for the fiscal year 1934 and 1935, and he'd like to be able to make me pay for every round, including the brass empties.

Well, to have paid for just 1,000 rounds, much less 50,000, would have used up a second lieutenant's pay for the next 40 years. So the worst he could do was to make me Post Exchange Officer in addition to my other duties. And that's just what he did.

To me it was the same as telling Eddie Rickenbacker that he was being taken

away from his Hat In The Ring squadron and moved to Paris to run the company store. I spent a restless night. But next morning sanity had been restored to Albrook Field. By the time I sagged into my new office at the Base Post Exchange, I was informed that my orders had been changed during the night. I was relieved of the PX responsibility and appointed Officer in Charge of Outlying Fields instead.

I managed not to gasp out my relief. I actually feigned disappointment, proving I'd already learned a few things during my three years' experience.

At first I thought the colonel had simply relented. But it seems they had talked about me a good part of the night at the Officers' Club and the colonel had decided he simply couldn't afford to assign me to a spot where thousands and thousands of dollars were handled daily. That was no place for a man who had let thousands and thousands of rounds of salvaged World War I machinegun ammunition run through his gun belts in a few months.

I felt heartened. At least our high command in the Army wasn't that foolish.

I knew I would have to do business with the Chucunacque Indians down in Darien, and they were headhunters. But that didn't worry me, for I'd be paying them to keep my auxiliary field free of the kunai grass and dangerous ant hills which rose up overnight and sometimes wrecked incoming planes. There was also the attraction for me that I'd have to fly to these outlying fields. Naturally, I'd have to use an airplane, and so I'd finally be in a position where it would be legal for me to fly in the afternoon.

Later on that year, all the practice with those countless rounds of ammunition paid off. I won my squadron gunnery trophy and went on to win over all the pursuit pilots in the Wing. Of course I had the added advantage of having used up all the allotment of ammo, so that my poor brother pilots couldn't practice. They ribbed me about it quite a bit. But I had learned to shoot, and when World War II came, I used that gunnery eye in a fighter plane against the Japanese. Often in China I would think back to my fellow pilots in Panama and imagine them sitting behind a desk somewhere in the Pentagon Building, saying, "Well, here's to old Bob Scott, the goddam time-hog shot down Jap number ten today. Guess all that fifty-caliber ammunition he stole from us back in thirty-five is paying off, after all." I was sure that some of them were still so mad that they probably would take up a collection to



send to the Jap pilot who would finally shoot me down.

Anyway, let's get back to Panama. For the first time since I'd gone off to West Point I felt as though I were a square peg. But at least I was in a square hole. I'd still get up before dawn and fly that P-12 with my squadron to the gunnery range and shoot at the targets, but only with my fair share of the ammo. Then I'd come back and fly formation with my squadron commander. And then, while most of the pilots were answering "beer call," I'd get Sergeant Curtiss to fix it so I could fly a mission of my own. I'd head out to sea and sweep the waters of Panama Bay for tiger sharks. In the afternoon I'd start up again and land on my auxiliary fields from the borders of Costa Rica on the north to Colombia on the south. Sure, they called me a "time-hog," but I was laughing to myself.

Around the pilots I'd gripe and complain that while they were drinking their beer, I had to test-hop their ships; while they took their siestas, I had to inspect their auxiliary landing strips; and at night, while they slept the sleep of the just, I was up there checking the boundary lights of the field.

I was a time-hog all right, but I was convinced that all this training wasn't just for the sake of training. We'd have to fight some day and I wanted all the practice I could get.

From Panama I was ordered to Randolph Field, Tex., where I began teaching men to fly.

I used to welcome a new student with open arms. Here was a bright young man I would show the greatest sights there were—sunrise long before those earth-bound people would ever see it, and the same sun after it had fallen from the sky in the darkening west. And every time I took one up, I'd think, "Look at all that blue up there, son. Look at all that space. That's the challenge, all right—the last frontier. Go up high enough and you can see the stars. They're your boundary lights, and your runway stretches all the way to the sun."

My heart was broken when the war came just before that 1941 Christmas, and I wasn't sent out to fight. I'd been a pilot for ten years, and in that time, I'd flown more than just about anybody else there was. I had been told time and again that I was too young to lead a squadron, too young even to lead a flight. But when I went to the general at the Training Command Headquarters at Moffett Field, he told me I was too old even to be a group commander for a bunch of kid fighter pilots. I almost shouted at him as I asked when in the hell I had ever been the right age.

It made no difference, though. He said I was too old and, what was more, too valuable in the job I was doing, teaching men to fly. He insisted I was going to sit right where I was and be a general.

But I wasn't. Starting that night, I wrote all the generals I knew. There weren't so many then, and few of the ones I wrote to even answered me. Most of them just ignored my request. Finally, help came from where I had least expected it, from the Plans Section of the Army Air Force in Washington. But I had to tell a barefaced lie to shake myself out of that job of checking student pilots. I had never flown a bomber, much less a Flying Fortress B-17, but I told this man I had, and he freed me from that desk.

The only trouble was that he landed me in the middle of an Indian tea plantation and I ended up piloting a "gooney bird," which was what the fighter pilots dubbed the C-47. Slow and colorless as it was, that was my tie with the fighting fronts, and by the pagan gods that hid up there in the peaks at the Roof of the World, the lofty Himalayas, I swore I'd maneuver that gooney bird to war.

Just over the Hump was Burma, and in the middle of Burma was a fighter pilot named Claire Chennault, the boss of the Flying Tigers.

The idea for the group of fighters in the sky to be known as the Flying Tigers came to General Chennault just about as soon as he arrived in China in 1937. He'd been assigned to make a survey of the tactical ability of the Chinese Air Force for Madame Chiang Kai-shek, the wife of Generalissimo Chiang, who recently had been appointed National Secretary of Aviation. Madame Chiang presented him with problems which would have tried the patience of Job. Instead of finding the ready-made nucleus of the International Air Force he had envisioned since World War I, he found the biggest "can of worms" he had ever encountered—an unorganized group of international adventurers who evidently had fled to China to escape something worse somewhere else. They were far more adept at barroom brawls and the science of bragging about past exploits than they were at displaying their talents in the air. Chennault found himself sadly witnessing more crackups per day than he had ever seen. In the simple routine of making landings, his "experts" destroyed enough planes to equip an air force. They did take off on one interception, but it turned out to be the wildest scramble of "hung-over" pilots in the whole world. They cracked up more of their own planes than they shot down of the enemy.



The big problem of the International Squadron wasn't in the air—Chennault could control them if he ever got them airborne—but down on the earth. They had established themselves firmly in Hankow's Dump Street, the local brothel area and headquarters of the opium peddlers.

For three years Chennault had to endure this heartbreaking display of a nation undergoing the agonies of rebirth with the dregs of the human race officiating in the midwifery. But it wasn't a total loss, for all the while he was compiling a wealth of intelligence on Japanese tactics and firmly laying his plans for a counter-offensive. And it was during this trying period that he caused huge quantities of gasoline, bombs and ammunition to be stored on fields in eastern China. While the rest of his world was asleep, Chennault knew there would be an opportunity to show the scoffers what fighter aviation, properly exploited, could do. All the time he kept forwarding intelligence reports to a War Department that had forced him to retire as a "has been" in 1937, at the age of 47. But no one who read his reports showed any interest in them.

Chennault knew in 1937 that America would be fighting the Japanese, and his aim was to prepare a battleground from which his country could fight. What he wanted wasn't a bunch of cast-offs, but a real International Squadron made up of American fighter pilots flying American airplanes with the privilege of fighting anywhere. It wasn't until January, 1941, that he started to make any headway. The U. S. Government suddenly realized the vital importance of keeping China alive, and Chennault jumped at the chance and sold his idea to Madame Chiang, who sent him to the United States to fight for the dream he had cherished since his retirement from the Army Air Corps.

As usual, Chennault skipped all the channels and started at the top. He sold himself eloquently to President Roosevelt through one of the President's advisors, Tommy Corcoran. And then, with Corcoran's help, he convinced Henry Morgenthau, Jr., the Secretary of the Treasury. Through Morgenthau he obtained the cooperation of Sweden in obtaining delivery of his American-built fighter planes—obsolete P-40 B Tomahawks. They weren't exactly what he wanted, but he had his hundred fighter planes, and all he needed now were the pilots.

He went from friend to friend in the military service. But the Army and the Navy gave him the run-around. They were hanging on to the pilots they had;

they were smack in the middle of their own expansion program. Chennault went to General Hap Arnold and pleaded, only to be informed that for Arnold to give up pilots would be ruinous.

But the spirit of adventure was still abroad in America, and Chennault took his appeal to the young men. He and his assistants went from air base to air base and covered most of the naval stations. From Pensacola to Randolph and Kelly Fields, they recruited their hundred pilots, and in addition they found 150 mechanics and armorers scattered through the Marines and the Navy and the Army Air Corps Reserve.

Some of them signed on as foreign legionnaires believing in the importance of their mission, but most of them joined up simply for the adventure and the knowledge that they would be flying fighter planes without being tied down with too many rules and regulations.

They slipped out of the United States aboard a neutral ship—the Dutch steamship *Jaugersfontaine*—and they were carried on the passenger list as anything but what they were. This First American Volunteer Group had a clandestine beginning all right, but at least it was a beginning.

Chennault met them in a Burmese lecture room with a blackboard. After that he sent them through a refresher course in the air with unglamorous basic trainers. Next he paired them off and pitted them against one another in the priceless Tomahawks. He stood on the ground and watched them with field glasses while they "fought" it out 10,000 feet above the Burma jungles.

Then, when they had landed, he told



IN HIS 30-year career, General Scott has flown over six million air miles, and he still does more flight time than most pilots.



## The Flying Tigers

them what had been wrong with their flying.

They hated him at first. To them he was a non-flying martinet. They knew nothing about his record over the past four years. Inevitably, though, his genius finally seeped through to the best ones, and the others simply didn't matter. Those who wanted to learn discovered the Old Man knew what he was talking about. By the time they had seen their first combat, they were converts. Those who had come along for the ride were scared out by then, and the malcontents and the drunks had been fired. The ones who met the acid test and remained were to blazon a flying record second to none.

Using the tactics of Chennault, the AVG became the Flying Tigers. There are many explanations as to how the name evolved. It is a fact that when the AVG was in lower Burma and had just finished its first fight, one of the pilots came in with a magazine picture of an RAF P-40 in North Africa. Its nose was gaudily painted into a grinning shark's mouth, with white teeth glistening, red tongue leering, and a baleful eye up near the gun ports. The art work stretched from the grill of the radiator back to the wing-root and it was especially adaptable to the conformation of the droop-chinned Curtiss-Wright P-40. It wasn't a tiger's voracious mouth, but it was a shark's—a tiger shark, the Chinese reported that the Japanese, being an island people, were superstitious about sharks, and therefore it seemed logical that a shark painted on the nose of the American fighter planes would be especially symbolic.

There was another story that the teeth represented those of the Kukien saber-toothed tiger, an animal still found in that particular province of eastern China, and which is an ancient symbol of China.

Regardless of how the design came into being, it is certain that the last glimpse many Japanese had of this world was the leering face of that tiger shark, hungry and anxious to cut him to pieces.

When Madame Chiang made her first speech to Chennault's adventurers after their victories against superior odds, she called them, "My Tigers of the Sky; my angels with or without wings." Newspaper men hungry for headlines picked up the phrase, and it stuck.

Personally I never was a real Flying Tiger. I'd like to have been, make no mistake about that. In fact, I tried to be. But when Chennault went around asking for volunteer pilots, all he could get were reserve officers who were given permission by the Army and the Navy to resign their reserve commissions and

join the First American Volunteer Group. Only in that way could this group of American mercenaries possibly fight the Japanese without creating an international incident between two nations not then at war. I tried to volunteer, but in doing so, I brought the State Department down on my head. I was told never to make such an offer again and to go on about my duty of running a training field at Cal-Aero Academy, Ontario, Calif.

Nevertheless, I gradually worked my way out from my Training Command detachment via the B-17 to India and Burma and eventually to China to wind up flying as a "guest star" with the Flying Tigers. When I did become their leader, it was after they were inducted into the regular military establishment on July 4, 1942.

Upon my return to the States from China in February, 1943, I was the leading Allied ace with 13 confirmed victories and 18 "probables." General Arnold sent me out on a speaking tour to various war plants where they were experiencing a plague of absenteeism. I would tell stories about the exploits of my men, and I couldn't help mentioning the Flying Tigers. After doing this all across the United States from pulpits, rostrums, stages, radio stations and just about anywhere I could find an audience, I discovered I was being introduced as a Flying Tiger and always written up as one in the press.

I would always commence my talks with the explanation that I regretted that I was not a true Flying Tiger, that I respected them more than any group of men I'd ever flown with during the war in China, and that after their induction into the regular Air Corps, I did command the new fighting force. This was known officially as the 23rd Fighter Group. No matter how carefully I explained it, though, the name Flying Tiger had far more headline appeal than 23rd Fighter Group, and the paper the next morning would simply headline "Flying Tiger says . . ." In the end, I just quit bothering to explain.

As long as I can remember I had wanted to be a fighter pilot. I flew P-1 pursuit ships at Kelly Field and graduated in them, but Mitchell Field, on Long Island, N. Y., was my first duty station. It was an observation group, and I was assigned to the 99th Observation Squadron.

I flew those Curtiss Falcon O1-Gs and later on O-39s. But fortunately a few months later the Army Air Corps was called upon by Postmaster Jim Farley to fly the air mail, and I was out of my observation planes and flying the U. S. mail across the hell-stretch from Newark



to Cleveland in single-seater P-12s. From there I went to Panama, still flying fighters, and after that I became an instructor at Randolph Field.

By the time the attack came on Pearl Harbor, I was a thoroughly experienced fighter pilot with some nine years and about 5,000 hours of flying time behind me. Now was my chance. On the night of December 7, 1941, I drove my car madly across Cajon Pass to report to my training base at LeMoore, Calif. That was when the sad awakening came. I wasn't being sent anywhere I was going to stay right there at a desk, running a Training Command base. My boss, General Harms, tried to soften the blow by telling me I was going to stay right at that desk and become the youngest general in the Army Air Corps. And when I made my speech about always having been too young and now suddenly being too old with never any in-between, he didn't bother to answer me. He just left me standing there dejected. But only for a short time. After I had written all the wheels I knew in the Air Corps, I finally got my chance to tell the biggest lie in the world—that I not only had flown the B-17 Flying Fortress but was an expert in same. With that lie on my lips and on my conscience, I went to war—an old fighter pilot with a mighty mission. My B-17 was one of seven heavy bombers that were going to make “a sea of flames” out of Tokyo in support of Jimmy Doolittle's B-25s. We would come from the land, they from the sea off the deck of a carrier.

We had already been advised that we didn't have much chance of coming back alive. So little, in fact, that our clothing had to be freshly issued at Wright-Patterson Field so there would be no names, initials or laundry marks. We couldn't even wear our “dog-tags.”

But at least I was out of the training command.

Then, after all that preparation, we didn't bomb Tokyo with Doolittle. Instead, the field we were to use in eastern China was overrun by the Japs and destroyed. Our mission was scrubbed and our ships taken away by a high-ranking general who had just been evacuated from the Dutch East Indies. I was sent to Dinjan, India, in Eastern Assam.

I was relegated to a fate even worse than sitting behind a desk. I was flying the ugliest duckling of them all, a C-47. At heart she was a great old lady of a ship, but to a fighter pilot, she was a wallowing, unwieldy albatross.

My job was delivering freight in the big gooney bird to Chennault's AVG over the Hump in Burma. I kept flying to China, taking in drums of aviation

gasoline, machine-gun ammunition, bombs and all sorts of war supplies. Then, one day, on the Loi-Wing field in Burma, I met Chennault during an air raid.

I poured my heart and soul into convincing him that I was a victim of circumstances, reduced to flying the struggling gooney bird which brought him his aviation gasoline. He finally consented to lend me one of his P-40s. I had it painted up like those of the Flying Tigers whom I'd already met in Burma and China, and with that single ship I became what our war correspondents called a “one-man air force.” Oh, I know it was a corny name. One man can do very little material good, even one of us egotistical fighter pilots. But that was a lean period of the war from the Allied point of view, and the reporters seized on anything that would make headlines. What was better than one over-age colonel flying a painted up P-40 escorting slow-plodding C-47s across the Hump, and at the same time trying to lure enemy Zeroes up for a dogfight?

One day some 500-pound bombs were off-loaded from a Brahmaputra River barge which had come up from Calcutta. They were dumped at Dinjan and were to be flown to China when the bombers came. But that might be a long time. First of all, more fuel had to be flown over the Hump, and fields had to be constructed in China to hold the big ships. So, for the time being, those big eggs seemed destined to remain in wet Assam and get rusty.

Up until that time—the spring of 1942—a P-40 had carried nothing larger than a 100-pound bomb. Anything as large as a 500-pounder was considered fantastic. But there was a belly tank on the P-40 which held 55 gallons and the aggregate weight of this fuel and the tank was just about the same as the big bomb. Not only that, but the size of the streamlined tank was almost identical to the diameter of the projectile. Of course, the bomb was longer with its tail fins, and upon that discrepancy hangs much of the suspense of this tale.

One of my mechanics, Sergeant Bonner, and his assistant, Sergeant Creech, told me they thought they could attach a 500-pound bomb to the belly of my fighter plane in place of the extra tank. Why not let them try? Every day we were seeing evidence of the almost uncontested Japanese troops coming steadily up the rivers and infiltrating the jungles. They were at Homalin, less than 100 miles south of where we were in eastern Assam. With my machine guns I could accomplish little more than to make them mad enough to shoot me down. But with the



heavy bomb I could sink their river boats, blow up the docks at Homalin and do some real damage.

So we took the belly tank off and attached the bomb, rigging the sway-braces so they steadied the bomb. I practiced how to drop the bomb by pulling the "T" handle on the floor of the fighter cockpit. My two sergeants, with lots of volunteer help from eager RAF mechanics, would get under my ship. They would attach the bomb with its shackle to the tank release; then, at their drop signal, I'd pull the "T" bar and the bomb would fall safely into their arms.

Naturally there were some problems. One was the peculiar ballistic fact that in dive-bombing (where the fighter is practically aimed like a projectile in a vertical dive at the target) the bomb is released at the lowest possible altitude and the plane is pulled out of the dive just in time to avoid running into the target. Upon being released, the bomb passes the airplane and sometimes strikes the whirling disk of the propeller and explodes.

Another one of the problems grew out of the tailfins of the bomb, which are necessary for stability after release. Three of the four fins caused no trouble. The first could point up toward the belly of the ship where there was plenty of room. Two of the others would go horizontally, one in each direction. It was the fourth which created the problem. This one projected straight down and was definitely a hazard. For in the P-40s, with the old style tailwheel, the aft end of the bomb extended far back from the shackle, and this last fin actually touched the ground when the plane was at rest. Sergeant Bonner decided the only solution was to cut off most of the fourth fin. It might affect the bomb's accuracy, but at least the fin wouldn't be down there under me, scraping the earth as I taxied.

Dive bombing in those days meant flying the bomb on a direct line to the target and keeping it there so long that when it was finally released the target was practically impossible to miss. You flew into the target and then, while the short tenth-of-a-second delay of the fuse gave you time to get away from the blast, you executed a maneuver we called "getting the hell out of there." The little missing part of the fourth fin was going to affect the trajectory of my bomb, but at such point-blank range it didn't matter.

Well, when I'm an old man, and my long white beard is getting caught in the flight controls of my ship, I'll still remember the takeoff with that first 500-pounder. We worked most of the night to hang that hunk of TNT and fuses on the P-40's belly and adjust the sway-

braces. We tested it a few times, and when I pulled the "T" bar, the bomb dropped all right. There we were, 12,000 miles from where that Curtiss-Wright Kittyhawk had been manufactured, and we had converted a P-40 into a B-40. It was a bright May morning. When the engine was turning over smoothly, Sergeant Bonner jumped on the wing and shouted: "Okay, Colonel! She's tight. Taxi slow. I've already pulled the nose and the tail fuse pins. She's armed now. Besides, we don't want her to drop off accidentally if you hit a bump. . . ."

He shook my hand and wished me luck. I taxied carefully out of the parking place where we had worked all night and I saw all my assistants watching me. As tired and greasy and haggard as they looked, they stood right there to watch the last act of the play. By the time I reached the head of the runway, I thought the least I could do was slide the canopy back and wave "thank you" to them all. But, as high and as enthusiastically as I waved my hand, I received no answering sign. In fact, I could barely see my men, who were hunkered down in a slit trench in case the bomb went off. Grinning to myself, I went down the runway all alone. The P-40 picked up speed slowly and I lifted her off just in time to clear the low trees at the far end and skim along over the tops of the glistening tea gardens of Assam. When I dared turn back across the field, I could see Sergeant Bonner and his volunteers all waving at me and wishing me good hunting.

High over Homalin I saw the four enemy barges. They had just come into the wide part of the river and were preparing to dock at the town. I held my altitude at 11,000 feet just above some broken clouds to keep them between me and the Jap gunners I'd heard were on the docks. Then I circled so as to make my surprise bombing run from out of the sun. If they heard the engine of my ship they would figure it was one of theirs anyway, for there weren't supposed to be any Allied planes around those parts. Then I dove, aiming at the next to the last barge. I figured that a "short" would take the last one and an "over" would get one of those ahead. By the time those barges mushroomed to almost their actual size in the iron ring of my gun-sight, and I reached down to pull my "T" handle, I couldn't miss. In fact, my main worry was whether I'd waited too long. As it was, the bomb went off so close to me that for a second I was afraid I'd cut it too fine. That plane shook in its pullout as though I'd been in the middle of the blast. But it helped me, too, pushing me in the direction of



home. I looked back and saw I'd made a direct hit on the third barge. I also saw enemy tracers arcing up into my flight path, but they all went astern. I kept the ship down as low as the tops of the jungle trees north of Homalin and zig-zagged, not pulling up until I was well away from the gunners. Then I climbed back above the friendly clouds and headed home for another bomb.

At Dinjan, Sergeant Bonner and his boys went over the ship for hits and loaded another 500-pounder while I got some breakfast. By dark they had loaded four of them and I had delivered them to Homalin. When I wrote my combat report for headquarters in New Delhi, I couldn't help calling the P-40 a B-40. After all, it had delivered a ton of bombs that day. The first took out barge number three loaded with fuel drums, damaged another and set it afire. I got the second and first while they were tied up at the docks. The last one I caught was filled with soldiers and floating down the river late in the afternoon.

I attracted more return fire when I came in on this one, for they were expecting me by then.

As the sun set and I headed home for the last time that day, the wreckage of all the barges and some large pieces of the docks were floating downstream. Black smoke was still rising from the warehouses along the wharf. So, while we had no bombers of either the USAF or the RAF there in eastern India, both the Japanese radio and our American newspapers reported "American Bombers Blast Invaders in Northern Burma."

But I was all ready to certify that General Lewis Hyde Brereton, commander of U. S. Forces in India, was in that shark-nosed P-40. General Brereton flew up twice to give me hell about playing hero in that fighter instead of concentrating on the job he had given me, supervising the C-47 gooney birds and delivering freight across the Hump. But I knew Brereton was a fighter pilot, too, and even when he threatened to send me back to Karachi, I just assumed he really expected I would keep flying that P-40. Now at least he had an offensive force in operation, small as it was. By the time the week was up, I had swept the Chindwin and the Irrawaddy, blown up an enemy fuel dump at Myitkyina in the middle of Burma, and flown all the way to Rangoon.

General Brereton came up again, but instead of firing me he had his executive read a citation for what he called "Gallantry in action against the enemy" and pinned a Silver Star on my dirty flying suit.

By the time the year was over, we had even hung 1,000-pound bombs on the bellies of the P-40s. And, while I never got to do it—for we had none of the larger bombs and no target justifying them, either—I heard that fighters in another part of the war carried bombs that weighed 2,000 pounds.

This sort of extracurricular activity permitted me to avoid frustration in a most frustrating theater of war. I kept on being the "one man air force" and coming to understand that while my collection of press clippings was glowing I wasn't really accomplishing very much except to satisfy my ego and the starving reporters. Thank goodness, I never did believe my own press. I knew it was only a stop-gap, good propaganda for the consumption of the disappointed public at home.

Besides, I was cut down to size very soon. Strange colonels began coming through Dinjan, special bird colonels from the big headquarters in sacred Washington, D. C. These men had long ago been picked by the high brass for key jobs. What chilled me was the rumor that they were to be the group commanders of the components of the greater air force which was in the making for East Asia. I wasn't even being considered. That wasn't so bad, for someday there had to be a big air force operating from China. But to one of these colonels would fall the biggest plum of all, the command of the 23rd Fighter Group. I had heard by the grapevine that it was to be composed of the Flying Tigers of Chennault, who had accepted a general's star. They were being inducted into the regular establishment. So far, all I had of the Flying Tigers was this one ship, and it was only on loan.

Then I met some of the new Tigers. I had run into them periodically as they came through Dinjan or when I landed at Kunming or some other field in Burma



WAR HORSE used against the Japs in China by the Flying Tigers, and later the 14th Air Force, was the P40. Photo by Jim Wilkinson.



or China. They were the most spectacular group of characters I've ever known. They weren't at all like my conception of what airplane pilots should look like in a war—even fighter pilots. They looked more like gunslinging desperadoes of the Old West, except that the guns they wore swinging low on their hips or protruding from shoulder holsters weren't for show. Each of them rode a P-40 with the same flair with which he might have ridden a spirited horse, and his "sixgun" was six 50-caliber machine guns firing at the rate of 7,200 rounds per minute.

When I first met them, I was rudely awakened. I more than half expected to be greeted with open arms. After all, we were Americans and we were a long way from home. Also, we were fighter pilots, even though I was a full colonel in the regular army, and I had been helping to deliver them the necessities of war. But instead of taking me in as one of them, they ridiculed me openly for being a "goddam regular." This I learned later was a rebound from the other regulars they had met since the U. S. A. had entered the war. One general in particular had been a thorn in their sides. While he had no jurisdiction over them, he was highly critical of their conduct and appearance in India when they flew over to accept delivery of their new airplanes. In one case there had been a drunken brawl during which this general reportedly had been insulted.

But gradually, all the animosity toward me was tempered. They began to hear about my exploits at Homalin in Chennault's P-40, and about the "one man air force" stuff repeated by Tokyo Rose. After Chennault had explained how I had tried to join them, only to be rebuffed by the State Department and the regular army, they accepted me. They invited me on missions as a kind of "guest star." I imagine they actually wanted to see if all they had heard was true or if it was just propaganda the Army was putting out. Anyway, one day a spokesman of the AVG came to see me and asked me if I would like to fly with them the next morning. It was the Emperor of Japan's birthday—Tokyo Rose had reminded them—and they were doing this raid into Indo-China just to honor him. If they burned up all the planes they'd heard the Emperor had on the field of Haiphong, they thought it would add to the fireworks.

Naturally, I accepted, still wondering if it meant that I was one of them, or if they were trying to get rid of me for good.

We had to get up at three a.m., stagger out to our fighters and run them up ourselves. Finally, we checked the ammo

and the topping of the fuel tanks. By four we were airborne, so we could approach Haiphong from out of the first glow of the sun, and effect a complete surprise.

It was quite a party, and the boys didn't try to lose me at all. On the contrary, they checked very closely to see that I learned the things they had learned the hard way in combat, which is the only way such facts can be learned. They instructed me on Chennault's tactics of fighting in pairs and using every advantage of our heavy ship against the disadvantages of the lighter, more maneuverable Zero.

But all the way I had much to think about:

I wondered what the Army would say when I turned up missing. My official duty was actually over there at the desk of that Ferry Command in the rain forests of Dinjan. Here I was on a non-regulation mission into a country taken over by the Japanese but still listed as French. If I was lucky and came back, nothing could ever be said about it. And if I were lost forever, my name could only be stricken from the rolls. Whatever I did would never be in the line of duty.

We caught the airplanes on the ground in the red glow of the rising sun and burned them all. Then, we came back by way of Laokay on the Indo-China-Chinese border and went down to beat up another field. Right in front of me, one of the Flying Tigers was shot down. I learned one thing on that mission. It wasn't all fun and glamour, and much of the swaggering attitude I saw in those kids was just plain necessary to keep their spirits up.

That night the AVG had a party. I had missed my return flight with my gooney birds, so I stayed over to celebrate the Emperor's birthday with the boys. During the party there was a scene I'll never forget. One of the "fair-haired" colonels from Washington who was being considered for the job of commanding the Tigers when they were inducted into the Air Corps got a little too much whiskey in him. He listened to the Tigers singing and bragging as long as he could, and then he lost his sense of reason. They'd been giving him the same kind of needling they had given me in the past, and the colonel couldn't take it. He got mad and gave them the word.

"You kids make me sick," he said. "Why, hell, I could shoot down any one of you. In fact, I'll dog-fight all of you!"

I don't know whether he was simply "lickered up" or just mad because he was too old and they had been riding him too hard. But he had put his foot squarely in it. They told him to sleep it



off and then meet them out at the line in the morning. Well, the next morning they were there, but the colonel didn't show. And soon afterward he was forgotten as one of the bright prospects to command the 23rd Fighter Group.

I didn't know it then, but the flight I had made with the AVG was my acid test. From then on I was frequently asked to fly with them, and after a number of appearances as their "guest" in combat, I was informed on June 27, 1942, by the Generalissimo himself, in Chennault's office, that I had been selected by Chennault and his AVG to be their regular army commander. By the Fourth of July, when they were inducted into the U. S. Army Air Force, I had already led them in a combat mission. I was a "blooded" fighter pilot with two victories and two probables, and for the first time I really knew I belonged.

A few days later, General Chennault told me, "I want you to fly to the eastern front, Scotty, and land at all the fighter bases. There are three of them, Kweilin, Lingling and Hengyang. Do a mission or two with each squadron. Then you'll know your men, and more important, they'll know you."

"Yes, sir," I said, anticipating the trip and especially remembering that there were a lot of enemy planes out there. I'd have a great chance to run up my score.

I took off in the P-40 that morning and climbed through thick fog. On top of the clouds I set my course almost due east for Lingling, which was the middle one of the three fighter strips. All of them extended in a straight line from Hunan Province in the north to Kwangsi in the south. Lingling was about halfway between.

After I had flown about 500 miles, I pressed the mike-button on top of my throttle and reported to the Lingling ground station ahead of me. There was one of these stations at each base: Richardson at Hengyang, Sasser at Lingling, and Mihalco at Kweilin. By the time I had called twice and received no acknowledgment from Sasser, Richardson broke in from Hengyang, but instead of simply saying he would pass my information on to Lingling, he asked cryptically, "How much fuel have you got?" When I told him, "Enough for thirty more minutes," he said: "Request your exact position."

I couldn't tell him to a pin-point. I'd been above clouds most of the two hours, and naturally there were no radio navigation aids out there in China, so I said, "Purely a guess, Rich. I'm west of Lingling, approximately forty miles from

destination. Am letting down through holes in overcast."

He came right back, and this time I detected a trace of excitement. "Reporting unidentified noise above clouds in sector. Have you sufficient juice to investigate?"

I didn't, but I couldn't resist replying with the old flier's cliché, "Roger-Wilco."

I looked at the map on my knee, interpreting the coordinates he had called to me. I discovered the "unidentified" airplane noise had last been heard on a line about halfway from Lingling northward toward Hengyang. I turned northeastward and started hunting for the plane.

I checked my gun switches and let my eyes stray down to check my fuel level. What I saw made a wave of doubt surge over me. Had it been a clear day, and had I known exactly where Lingling was, my problem would have been simple. But I didn't know, and I had less than 20 minutes of fuel remaining. I would be on my reserve very soon, and that would give me another 18 minutes. But if I met any Jap fighters, I would have to demand "war emergency" power from my engine. And I would use up my juice in a hell of a lot less than 18 minutes.

I saw nothing for what seemed like hours. All the while I tried hard not to look at the fuel gauge. Nevertheless, my eyes kept being pulled back to it as though hypnotized by the vision I had of that telltale needle fluctuating in the red-for-danger area.

Over the radio I could hear that a flight of fighters had just landed at Hengyang and were out of fuel. They were being serviced, but they couldn't get airborne in time to help me. At Lingling the squadron had landed with battle damage a few minutes before.

The planes on the ground at Kweilin were too far away to help. I knew I would have to make this "contact" myself or it wasn't going to be made.

Ten more minutes crawled by. I had to make a decision fast now. I had been on that short reserve a long time. I had even turned back to wing tanks that were dry, hoping for a few fumes to help me stay up there just a little bit longer.

Just at that instant I saw the Jap plane. It was a twin-engined bomber silhouetted against the brilliant white of the cloud-tops. It was quartering my course, flying obliquely across my nose, with course about due northwest. I pushed my stick forward and nosed back into the tops of the clouds. He hadn't seen me yet. And he was over 1,000 yards away, maybe 2,000. I turned my gunsight light on and flicked the gunswitch toggle back and



forth. I wiped the perspiration from my palms, then pulled the nose of the ship gradually up, pushing the throttle all the way to the stop. The Jap bomber was so much larger when I saw it again that I thought it was a different ship. I aimed ahead of it, anticipating the position it would be in when it crossed my nose. It was maybe 100 yards away, and I concentrated on two things, the bomber and my gunsight. Then I froze.

In the excitement of the sudden contact and the worry about my dwindling fuel supply, I had completely forgotten something General Chennault had told me again and again:

"Never, but never, go down blindly to attack a lone bomber no matter how innocent and inviting it may appear. Look before you do—above, behind, and below. For he may want you to come in after him."

I tore my eyes from the lighted reflection of the "sitting duck." And there they were, Zeroes, fighters, just as the Old Man had tried to tell me they would be. Fifteen hundred feet above and to either side of the bomber, behind it and just waiting with drooling guns for me to commit myself. Two escorting fighters, riding herd and waiting.

But had they seen me? Or had I been hidden in the white canyons of the clouds? I had so much to worry about that I stopped my nervous turning of the gun-switches off and on.

Suddenly the bomber crossed my guns and instinctively I pulled the trigger. I held it down and saw the tracers go out ahead of the Jap ship and then appear to arc exactly into the nose, then into the right-hand engine, and disappear into the rear wing and fuselage. I centered my guns on the right engine where the fuel tanks were buried. Even if I missed the engine, all I needed was to put a burst in those tanks. I had to turn with the Jap now in order to hold my sight on him.

First his plane seemed to shiver uncertainly, as though he was trying to decide which way to turn. It wasn't that, though; it was the impact of those armor-piercing 50-caliber slugs. I saw a long stream of very light gray smoke appear astern of the bomber. I kept looking for the fire, but it wasn't smoke, it was the atomized gasoline from his shattered tanks. Then all that vaporized gasoline caught fire, ignited either by my tracers or by his own exhaust. I watched the plane die; there was no explosion at all, just fire.

When it disappeared, it was a glowing, orange ball of fire, and behind it the white clouds turned black.

I crossed above the last blob of the smoke with my guns still going. When I finally took my finger off the trigger, I could still hear guns, but they weren't mine. I saw the cannon shells whoosh past me even as I heard the awesome noise of them exploding. I swung my head to the rear and looked right into the barrels of all the guns on the two Zeroes.

I was in the worst position possible for me, and the best for them. I was caught in a crossfire. My opponents were far lighter and more maneuverable than I. If I ducked into the clouds after the bomber, they would dive right after me.

I remembered what the Old Man had said about getting the hell out of there, but by that time I was remembering something else, too—about turning into trouble, rather than away from it, when the chips are really down. "If you ever get caught, don't try to run straight away," he had said. "You can outlive the Zero, but you need time to build up speed. As a last resort, turn into him. That's your only chance. You'll be closing the gap mighty soon, but your guns outrange his. Get him before he has the range."

I "reefed-in" on that P-40 as hard as anybody has ever pulled one into a climbing turn. I blacked out momentarily as I tried to twist the heavy ship around to face the nearer of the two Zeroes. Completely ignoring the other—he was almost twice the distance from me—as this one closed in, I eased up on the pull-out and began firing before I had him centered in my sight. I kept on firing at him until we almost collided; then the clouds were all around me. I thought it was clouds then, but it could have been the smoke of the exploding Zero.

I stayed in those friendly clouds for a while, reversed my course a couple of times, and came out heading south a few thousand feet above the mountains.

The river was just over the first hill and I knew it led up to Hengyang and down to Lingling. I didn't know which was closer, but something drew me southward. I didn't see the other Zero anywhere so I pulled the throttle back and let the engine run as slow as possible, leaning the mixture more and more and navigating close to the river. I saw the bend in the river and a couple of other landmarks that I'd found on my map. Soon Lingling came into view and I could see the P-40s scattered about the field. I called Sasser on my radio and identified myself. Then I threw caution to the winds, added power to my engine slowly, and had the good sensation of the fighter building up speed again. Then I buzzed Lingling at almost runway level



and did my victory roll. As I recovered, and hastened into my landing approach, I told Sasser that I had made the interception, had destroyed the bomber for sure and maybe one of the fighters.

I was careful to tell my story very simple that day and make nothing more than a claim for "probables." But within an hour after my landing, word had come from the Chinese Warning Net that my bomber had crashed in flames close to Leiyang, and a smaller plane had fallen close by. We checked the maps and discovered that Leiyang was some 45 miles northwest of Lingling. I took the squadron commander's jeep, and with Lieutenant C. K. Wang along as an interpreter, I headed for the wrecks.

It was almost dark when we reached the area. We saw the bomber first. While a good portion of it had landed unconsumed by the flames, eager Chinese scavengers who reached it first had stripped it of everything remotely usable. Several miles from the crash scene I saw villagers with small pieces of the aluminum skin of the ship, pieces of the engine, the guns, and even clothing off the dead bodies.

The fighter had come straight in, but the crash in the mud of the rice paddy had thrown the body of the pilot free. The very fact that he had been buried in the stinking mud had saved him from what had happened to the other bodies. The deep mud had hidden him until I came up in the jeep. That was a break because I needed his identification papers, a Jap ID card or something, to give Lieutenant Wang a chance to figure out his organization and where he had flown from.

We pulled the body free of the mud and I went through the pockets.

I couldn't tell the pilot's rank for he wore a flying suit about like mine and there were no insignia on it. But I found a little green book in the button-down pocket and it was what we needed. It was his pay record, my interpreter said. There was his rank and his serial number and the day he had been born. It didn't hit me hard then, but as I riffled the pages of the wet book a photograph dropped out. Lieutenant Wang picked it up and handed it to me. It was a simple snapshot of a family group. I looked at the man I had shot down and the woman who stood beside him. Between them was a little girl. She could have been the same age of my own daughter back in the States. I looked at the photo a long time, then gave it to Wang to put in the water-proof envelope which he would pass on to Military Intelligence. I walked over to the visible part of the Zero to look for a samurai

sword. I wasn't very much interested in souvenirs, but I had to do something. Just as I found it, I heard Lieutenant Wang say, "He was a major last year. He died a colonel, like you are now. The picture from his wife says on the back, 'Our hearts fly with you. Our love awaits your landing'."

When we had driven through the darkness back to Lingling, I was very tired. I had seen a part of the war that we fliers rarely see. There was a party going on when we arrived back at the base, but though I had a couple of drinks with the boys, my heart wasn't in it.

I never was quite the same again. From that night on, no matter what the temptation, I never again went out to a wreck. As far as I was concerned, that was strictly the concern of Military Intelligence. They could have it.

Then the bureaucrats in Washington called me back to put me on display for the defense workers. It was May, 1944, before I returned to Kunming after an absence of more than a year. Things had changed. Where before there had been only my skeleton fighter group, now there was the full-grown 14th Air Force. But General Chennault hadn't changed. He didn't even hear the message I gave him from General Arnold to the effect that I was to function as a liaison officer only, and to fly no combat. In fact, I didn't even get to tell the Old Man that I wasn't there on combat status. He was so glad to have me back that he spent the first night telling me all about his new plans. He wanted me to fly a new P-51 Mustang to Siam in Shensi Province the next morning and see why in hell he was losing so many planes on strafing missions.

The next afternoon, I made my first fighter sweep in a new territory, over the Yellow River bridge and north to the Great Wall of China and from there along the tracks of the Luan Spur. We caught a couple of trains that afternoon and ended up strafing them and letting the steam out of the engines. "Loco Sticking," my new wing men called it. It was a kick to feel the exhilaration of combat again and to be fighting again for the greatest combat leader I was ever to know. Before I knew it, I had led 14 combat missions and had found out at least a little of why General Chennault was losing so many men on strafing jobs. But then the courier flew up from Kunming and said he had a super-sensitive radiogram for me, something referred to as an "eyes only" message:

I SENT YOU TO CHINA FOR LIAISON  
DUTY ONLY STOP YOU WILL REVERT  
TO LIAISON DUTY AND REPORT TO ME



## The Flying Tigers

EVERY DAY BY PRIORITY ONE STOP  
YOU ARE NOT TO ENTER COMBAT  
AGAIN STOP ACKNOWLEDGE STOP  
ARNOLD

I thought Chennault would read the message and laugh and tell me he would take care of General Arnold. But I found out I didn't really know the Old Man. He blew sky high, said he didn't want any VIPs in his theater, and if I had suddenly become so valuable that I couldn't fly his fighters in combat, then I should get the hell out of China.

That night, after I'd picked up my return orders from headquarters, I felt as though I'd lost my last friend. Then there was a knock at my door and the Old Man walked in.

"Scotty," he said quietly, "I'm sorry I was so short with you. I know you can't help it. But at the same time I hope you understand my side too. A lot of things have happened out here since you left. They've hurt me even more than when you were here. When they let you come back, I thought I saw a little hope. I thought maybe they were going to give me some of the things I've been asking for. But that message from Arnold was the last straw." He stopped for an instant and lighted a cigarette.

"I hope you understand why I don't want you back as a VIP. Go on home and try to get me those navy five-inch rockets you told me about. I want to try them on the locomotives. I'll bet the Japs won't patch them up and use them the next day the way they do after we strafe them with fifty calibers."

I went home, and the first thing I did was get a load of the new HVARs from the Navy and have them transported out as ballast in the holds of Liberty ships, a thousand to each ship. When the atom bomb was dropped, I was back in action using the rockets against trains on the Luan Spur near Shanghai. Later on I carried them to Okinawa and used them against enemy shipping between there and the Japanese home islands.

A few years later, after I had been Deputy National Commander of the Civil Air Patrol, had commanded our first jet base at Williams Field in Ariz., had gone from there to Germany to command the 36th Fighter Bomber Wing, and then had come home to graduate from the National War College in Washington, D. C., I ended up as Director of Information Services for the Air Force.

I was Brigadier General Scott by then, but I was still trying to get in as much flying time as I could.

I was finally moved out of Washington after two years in the public relations job and was sent to Luke Air Force Base

near Phoenix, Ariz., as the commanding general of a jet base. There my career of flying military aircraft ended—at least for the time being—and in a rather disappointing manner. Not by a crash, or even by me finally getting tired of flying. Not even by a physical disability. It was because of pressure from the top, from those confirmed conformists who made my beloved Air Force practically unbearable. I had flown too much, and what was worse, I had talked too much and written too many glowing stories about it.

The last official act of my Air Force career was a speech, and the thing which preceded it was another one of my controversial flights.

That day, as "an old gray-haired general" who likes to fly more than he likes any other job in this cockeyed world, I had flown twice across the United States in a jet fighter. Just about 4,600 miles from Long Beach, Calif., to Riverhead, N. Y., and back by way of Andrews Air Force Base to Phoenix, Ariz. It was mostly sub-sonic but at times my J-57 was blasting me super-sonically across America. Sure, it was spectacular, but it was my last Air Force flight after nearly 30 years in the saddle, and I wanted my last cross-country in Air Force uniform to be something special. Therefore, when I blasted-off from Andrews over Washington, D. C., I routed my Super-Sabre for an almost complete Great Circle course of the United States.

While I was racing through the sky on my way to the great Arizona desert, I kept thinking about the Russian sputnik, somewhere out there in space. It both galled me and worried me.

It wasn't the 184 pounds of Soviet metal and electronic gear which caused me concern, but the fact that Communist Russia—which I had been taught from childhood to consider a nation of bearded and backward fools—had put it there. Those fumble-fingered peasants had chained this miracle and placed a satellite in space.

It meant several things to me. The Soviet Union had the capability of launching an intercontinental ballistic missile which, although still only a possibility as a reliable weapon, loomed ominously on our horizon. It meant that my country, so long considered the world leader in science, had been out-generated by those Russian peasants. No blood had been shed, but as far as I was concerned, the U. S. A. had suffered a stunning technical and scientific defeat.

That night I said as much in a speech to an audience in Phoenix. And the next morning, it hit the fan. Newspapers in my home area carried headlines which



fairly shrieked: "AIR FORCE GENERAL SAYS SPUTNIK IS POISED LIKE A SWORD AT THE HEART OF AMERICA."

And so it was.

The next morning I thought I was about to be arrested as I walked into my office as Commander, Luke Air Force Base. The FBI wasn't there but the OSI was, which is the Air Force equivalent. I was in the soup for mentioning the tabooed word, "sputnik."

This is the crux of it. We have indicated by our actions a fear of finding out the truth. That is wrong. No nation, no service, can ever remain strong unless it leaves itself open to objective criticism. I have served our Air Force for nearly 30 years. I love it more than anything else in life. Yet I know that we airmen are being muzzled today just about as much as were the non-conformers to the Old Army and Old Navy propaganda during the martyrdom of Billy Mitchell.

Perhaps you don't remember the months just prior to World War II. In those days our country exhibited a fierce ego concerning many of its most important weapons. We old-timers can recall when the Bell Airacobras and the Curtiss Tomahawks were ballyhooed as the world's greatest fighter planes. They were superior to every other fighter in the sky. After all, weren't they American?

Well, we who flew them found out the cold stark truth, and we found it out by having to watch men die. We knew they lacked super-chargers, that they couldn't fight at high altitude, that they couldn't turn with the cheaper, lighter, flimsier, unarmored, under-gunned little Jap Zero. We found this out the hard way, but we couldn't talk then. We were committed and we had to do the best with what we had. The acid test of combat proved once and for all the foolhardiness of empty praise and self-justification. Ask any pilot who fought that second-rate Zero with the heavy P-40; ask the men who battled the Messerschmitt or the Focke-Wulf with the same Tomahawk. Ask them what happened in combat.

Fortunately, we have realists, too, who don't listen to self-praise and who don't automatically believe all the things they read. Men like Chennault and General George Kenney and the likes of them. The Old Flying Tiger taught us how to use the good qualities of our heavy ships against the Zero. And he taught us never to believe all we heard and only part of what we saw. Above all, he pounded it into us not to let that cheap Mitsubishi suck us in to fighting their way. That's why we're here today.

I don't mean to knock the old P-40 all the way out of the sky. I just mean that war is over now. Let's plan ahead this

time, not behind. Let's not take anything for granted; the fighter pilot who doesn't look around is dead. Only by expecting the unexpected and by constantly perfecting his techniques can he hope to survive. Complacency is the beginning of the end.

I never quite reached space. And I don't want to usurp one tiny morsel of the credit due the fine pioneers who shared the dangers and the rare moments of success—Yeager, Everest, Kincheloe, Apt, Crossfield and the others, who literally soared the ramparts of our planet. But I have flown along the fringes of space. I have skirted the upper reaches of the atmosphere, for longer periods and for a greater total time than almost any other man. As a fighter pilot I have flown alone and I have flown more than 6,000,000 miles.

They were all precious moments. I have known serenity in flight. I have had time to contemplate as few men have. And from that unexcelled vantage point, hovering there between the earth and space, I have stared into the Central Blue, into the fringe of the upper vaults of perpetual darkness. This I have discovered; up there our future lies. Out there awaits our tomorrow . . . for good or evil.

But this is the danger. We are not alone in this comprehension. And the sudden realization of this new arena where the battles of survival will be fought in the minds of men, and in their very souls, makes me speak out. We must be ready to fight them.

THE END

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*News dispatches from recent issues of  
The Calcutta Statesman*

**DARJEELING**—Efforts are being made to reintroduce the cheetah, now extinct in India, by importing some of these animals from Africa and settling them in open, dry tracts in central, west or south India, preferably where black buck—their natural prey—are prevalent. Cheetahs, fleetfooted and superb hunters, were once plentiful in India and were tamed and kept as hunting pets by Indian princes.

**CALCUTTA**—Mangoes, sold by a few West End fruit shops under the classification "exotic fruits" along with litchis, avocados, Cape gooseberries and kumquats, are fast gaining popularity in the United Kingdom. But the supply at present is almost wholly limited to private importers and to Indian students who receive small consignments for themselves and their British friends. In the market a mango fetches a shilling for each anna it costs in India.

**BOMBAY**—India's first atomic power plant with a capacity to generate 250,000 k.w. will be located between Bombay and Ahmedabad and will go into operation by 1964. Overall cost of the plant, which will be in the coastal area near Bombay, will be Rs 55 crores.

**AMRITSAR**—The Ravi has eroded more than 500 feet of the Dhussi Bund near Raipur Kalan in Ajnala tehsil. The Ravi is changing its course and affecting several villages on the Indian side.

**DACCA**—The Karnaphuli Paper Mill in East Pakistan has succeeded in its experiment to use jute cutting as paper pulp. The resultant paper is said to be as good as that produced from bamboo. The experiment is of particular importance to this province where the disposal of jute cuttings has been presenting a problem ever since India stopped buying them, the annual surplus averaging about 500,000 bales after export.

**NEW DELHI**—It is now reasonably certain that the General Election in 1962 will be held throughout the country according to the new system of voting by marking ballot papers, which has lately been tried in selected areas.

**NEW DELHI**—A recent experiment in operation of long trains was conducted

on the Gua-Burnpur section of the South-Eastern Railway. A train two-thirds of a mile long carrying 6,500 tons of iron ore completed the 164-mile journey in 13 hours 45 minutes—an all-time record for this country. The longest trains in the world, which are only slightly longer, are run in the U. S. A. and Russia and carry loads up to 7,000 tons.

**NEW DELHI**—Fifty-two English dailies had a circulation of 986,000 or a little over a quarter of the total circulation of 3.606 million for 321 daily newspapers in all languages in India in 1958, according to the Registrar of Newspapers. There were 73 Hindi dailies but the total circulation was 545,000—a little more than half of the English newspapers.

**DACCA**—The first consignment of newsprint produced in Pakistan was released on the market recently when a local newspaper put it for trial printing.

**NEW DELHI**—Heads of stone idols, some of them masterpieces of sculpture from the sixth and seventh centuries, have been stolen from temples in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. It is believed that an interstate gang of idol-lifters is involved in organized vandalism for commercial purposes. More than 100 of the heads were recovered by police in a raid on a curio shop in Sundernagar.

**CALCUTTA**—The Union Government proposes to bring forward a bill providing for the taking over of "mismanaged" tea estates following labour trouble. The Industries Development and Regulation Act does not cover the tea estates and other plantations, hence the need for separate legislation.

**NEW DELHI**—Television is not for the people of Old Delhi, at least not yet. An A.I.R. official said no sets could be installed there because of "technical and administrative difficulties." He added: "The technical difficulty is with regard to transforming direct current into A.C. and the administrative one relates to the enforcement of an order, Section 144 Cr. P.C. If TV sets are placed there people will naturally assemble around them and that would violate the order."

**LAHORE**—A West Pakistan government official was granted four months leave on average pay 13 weeks after he had died of heart failure.

**SURAT**—An expectant mother, marooned on a tree-top by the Tapti floods, gave birth to a child while still on top of the tree. Other members of her family, taking shelter with her, had hurriedly prepared a makeshift cot in the branches. The baby was born while the flood was at its peak.



# BOOK REVIEWS



Edited by **BOYD SINCLAIR**

**THE WINSTON AFFAIR.** By Howard Fast. Crown Publishers, New York, September 1959. \$3.50.

Howard Fast has written a dramatic, suspenseful novel around a court-martial in CBI in which an insane American officer is on trial for the murder of a British soldier.

**THE GREAT BOMBAY EXPLOSION.** By John Ennis. Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, September 1959. \$3.50.

During our war in CBI, a ship blew up at the Bombay docks in one of the greatest disasters of all time. This is the story. One American soldier, Fred Friendly, received the Soldier's Medal for heroism.

**FLIGHT FROM ASHIYA.** By Elliott Arnold. Alfred Knopf, New York, September 1959. \$3.95.

A thriller type novel about conflict in an Air Force crew. The plot is built around rescue of Japanese survivors of a shipwreck in the China Sea.

**GO NAKED IN THE WORLD.** By Tom Chamales. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, September 1959. \$4.95.

Another novel by the former CBI officer whose writing has created controversy in the minds of former CBIs. This one is about a discharged soldier's experiences after the war in Chicago.

**KRISHNA FLUTING.** By John Berry. The Macmillan Company, New York, October 1959. \$3.95.

This novel is the first winner of the publisher's annual \$7,500 fiction award, about a young man who is part Hindu, part Quaker. The picture of India is vivid.

**FLOWERS OF HIROSHIMA.** By Edita Morris. The Viking Press, New York, September 1959. \$3.50.

The effects of radiation on the people of Hiroshima when the atomic bomb was dropped, built around a story about an American who visits the city. Little plot, worthy subject, effective propaganda.

**THE SILENT WAR IN TIBET.** By Lowell Thomas Jr. Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, October 1959. \$3.95.

This book was announced before the present India-China border clashes, but

Thomas and his publisher have managed to get in something about them. Deals with other things besides Tibetan resistance.

**ONE MAN AND A THOUSAND TIGERS.** By Kesri Singh. Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, August 1959. \$3.50.

The publisher claims that Colonel Singh, forest and game expert in India, has hunted more tigers than any man alive. He tells stories of danger, action, and suspense.

**MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE.** By Carl Mydans. Harper and Brothers, New York, September 1959. \$4.00.

The autobiography of a Life magazine photographer. There is much about World War II and the Philippines, where Mydans was imprisoned by the Japanese for two years.

**BATTLE: THE STORY OF THE BULGE.** By John Toland. Random House, New York, September 1959. \$5.00.

You feel as if you're there when you read John Toland's account of the Battle of the Bulge. That's because he traveled two years on two continents talking to hundreds of people before he wrote it.

**DOCTOR IDA.** By Dorothy Clarke Wilson. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, October 1959. \$5.95.

The biography of a selfless woman, Dr. Ida Scudder, a medical missionary, who in 60 years in India struggled to establish a hospital and a medical university.

**WOMANHUNT.** By Mark Derby. The Viking Press, New York, August 1959. \$3.50.

A smooth and professional suspense story about a British agent in Malaya who is kept busy investigating Communists and stalking a ferocious tiger at the same time. He has time for the girl, too, and gets her.

**THE SIEGE AT PEKING.** By Peter Fleming. Harper and Brothers, New York, September 1959. \$4.00.

The story of the 55-day Boxer Rebellion in 1900 when fanatical Chinese peasants dedicated themselves to the extermination of foreigners and Chinese Christians. Tense narrative style.

**ORDE WINGATE.** By Christopher Sykes. World Publishing Company, Cleveland, September 1959. \$6.00.

A biography of the famed British general who invaded Burma with the Chindits in the CBI war, going in aboard gliders led by Colonel Phil Cochran. Wingate died in a Burma air crash.



## Commander's Message

by

**Harold H.  
Kretchmar**

National Commander  
China-Burma-India  
Veterans Assn.



### Salaams:

The month of September was an extremely busy one for me. Virtually all my spare time was taken up writing and answering correspondence. At the present rate I may exceed Doucette's record for letter writing. October has started out like a repetition of September.

On September 15th, I along with Al Meyer, Tom Staed, Joe Fenaja and Cliff Davis of the St. Louis Basha accompanied by Pat Staed and Katherine Fenaja traveled to Normal, Ill., to attend the funeral of Bob Bolender, past national commander, who died as a result of burns suffered in an explosion in his home. The five members of the St. Louis Basha and Jack Henricks of Bloomington, Ill., acted as honorary pallbearers.

Bob's death came as a great shock and those of us who have known and loved him through these many years and the CBI-VA have suffered a tremendous loss. Bob had always given generously of his time and efforts toward the advancement of our organization and he did a marvelous job during his term as commander. Have recently been informed of the deaths of two other of our charter members, so it appears that our ranks grow thinner, with the passing years.

To those of us who remain there passes a trust to do everything in our power to make our organization grow and progress so that it remains as a living monument to those who had the foresight to recognize the potential of a group such as

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ours. I feel also that our association is a living reminder of those who labored, fought, sweated and died in our theater and to those who waited and worried for them at home.

Am convinced that there is a limitless desire among our members and prospective members to form new bashas in various parts of the country where none exist now. What seems to be lacking is initiative to get the ball rolling. Too, it appears there is a tendency to wait and hope that someone else will get things started and as a result things remain in a state of status quo. Here is a challenge for some of you potential leaders and organizers to put your abilities to a test. All it takes is one or two aggressive wallahs to push things off and normal enthusiasm will take over. Know from experience and observation that those willing to give some of themselves to a basha are those who derive the greatest pleasure through it. The results of a little effort can be very rewarding. If you want to know how to get started, write and ask me.

By the time you read this article I will have attended the Iowa CBI meeting in Dubuque on October 24th-25th and have been to Washington, D. C., where in cooperation with the Joseph Stilwell Basha we will have held a ceremony presenting the CBI-VA plaque to the Amphitheater Trophy Room of Arlington National Cemetery, honoring the dead of our theater, on October 31st.

Our plaque is one we can be justly proud of. The emblem is the CBI shield colored on cast bronze, encircled by a bronze ring bearing the name of our organization. The emblem is set on a dark green polished marble base 5½ by 6½ inches. At the front of the base at an oblique is attached a brass plate, reading: 'TO THE MEMORY OF THE UNKNOWN HERO OF WORLD WAR II'. The unknown soldier of WW II is buried beside the unknown soldier of WW I and the Korean War and represents the dead of our conflict.

The first national executive meeting of this term will be held at 1:30 p.m. November 14th in St. Louis at the Sheraton-Jefferson Hotel. All basha commanders are invited and guests are always welcome. For reservations write the hotel at 415 N. 12th St., St. Louis 3, Mo.

Don't forget: Any Roundup reader who is interested in finding out about the China-Burma-India Veterans Association is invited to contact me at the address below or write Eugene R. Brauer, Adjutant, P. O. Box 1848, Milwaukee 1, Wisc.

**HAROLD H. KRETCHMAR**  
National Commander  
2625 Arthur Avenue  
Maplewood 17, Mo.





TYPICAL view of farmland in Southern Kwangsi, China, with mountains in background. Photo by William E. Main.

#### Temple at Agra

● The "progress report" on the new rival building to the Taj Mahal was the first I'd heard of this. Was stationed at Agra for over a year, saw just about everything in the area, but—I repeat—this is the first I have heard of this. You'd think anything already 55 years under construction would be a real tourist must.

GEORGE A. FOSTER,  
Dayton, Ohio

#### Deaconess Muller

● In the May issue read where Charles A. Thomas of Dallas, Texas, mentioned Deaconess Anna Muller and her whereabouts. She is now residing in her homeland, Germany. Majority of the Lutheran missionaries who served in China are now in Japan and Formosa—also two other sisters, Karoline and Kuni, the latter a newly qualified dentist. Both were well known and loved by many military people, and rendered many actions of kindness to our troops and our leaders. This past June and July I toured the continent for seven weeks—it was my privilege to visit Sister Karoline's family in Hanburg, Germany. What a glorious celebration! Although we had never met

before, such joyful hospitality! They all knew about the many acts of kindness rendered to the missionaries by GI's. I will always cherish and remember the many actions of kindness and service rendered to us by the Lutheran deaconess—just as I cherish each issue of our Ex-CBI Round-up magazine.

ERNEZE F. POPE,  
Oklahoma City, Okla.

#### Served in Calcutta

● Served 18 months in Calcutta, India, during World War II.

MRS. J. W. BURRIS,  
Columbus, Ga.

#### Likes Roundup

● You deserve much praise for the swell job you're doing for us ex-CBIers.

GLENN C. KIEFFER,  
Hershey, Pa.

#### P-40 vs. Jet Fighters

● I took a good, long look at the very interesting picture on page 2 of the June issue, which shows one of our dear old P-40's coming in for a landing. When you think of the grand job those ships did for us back in 1941-45, and compare that piece of junk with the newest jet fighter planes, you wonder how we managed to win the war. I guess the World War I veterans looked upon the P-40 with the same awe in comparing it with the old bi-planes of 1917.

JAMES E. WYCOFF,  
Jersey City, N. J.



CHINESE TROOPS line up in front of the C-46 transport at an air base, to be taken to an American staging area in India. There they were to undergo processing to ready them for fighting in the Burma jungles. The first big stop for many of these soldiers turned out to be Myitkyina. Photo by Jack Jenkins.



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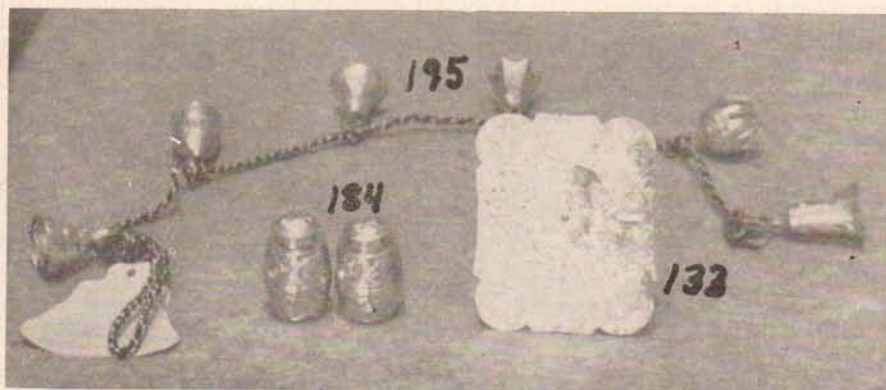


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